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Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

Letter dated 22 December 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Astana Commemorative Declaration adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) at the OSCE Summit held on 1 and 2 December 2010 in Astana, Kazakhstan (see annex).

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 122 (q).

(*Signed*) Byrganym **Aitimova**
Permanent Representative of the
Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 22 December 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Astana Commemorative Declaration: towards a security community

1. We, the Heads of State or Government of the 56 participating States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) have assembled in Astana, 11 years after the last OSCE Summit in Istanbul, to recommit ourselves to the vision of a free, democratic, common and indivisible Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security community stretching from Vancouver to Vladivostok, rooted in agreed principles, shared commitments and common goals. As we mark the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act and the twentieth anniversary of the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, we reaffirm the relevance of, and our commitment to, the principles on which this Organization is based. While we have made much progress, we also acknowledge that more must be done to ensure full respect for, and implementation of, these core principles and commitments that we have undertaken in the politico-military dimension, the economic and environmental dimension and the human dimension, notably in the areas of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

2. We reaffirm our full adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and to all OSCE norms, principles and commitments, starting from the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris, the Charter for European Security and all other OSCE documents to which we have agreed and our responsibility to implement them fully and in good faith. We reiterate our commitment to the concept, initiated in the Final Act, of comprehensive, cooperative, equal and indivisible security, which relates the maintenance of peace to the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and links economic and environmental cooperation with peaceful inter-State relations.

3. The security of each participating State is inseparably linked to that of all others. Each participating State has an equal right to security. We reaffirm the inherent right of each and every participating State to be free to choose or change its security arrangements, including treaties of alliance, as they evolve. Each State also has the right to neutrality. Each participating State will respect the rights of all others in these regards. They will not strengthen their security at the expense of the security of other States. Within the OSCE no State, group of States or organization can have any pre-eminent responsibility for maintaining peace and stability in the OSCE area or can consider any part of the OSCE area as its sphere of influence. We will maintain only those military capabilities that are commensurate with our legitimate individual or collective security needs, taking into account obligations under international law, as well as the legitimate security concerns of other States. We further reaffirm that all OSCE principles and commitments, without exception, apply equally to each participating State, and we emphasize that we are accountable to our citizens and responsible to each other for their full implementation. We regard these commitments as our common achievement and therefore consider them to be matters of immediate and legitimate concern to all participating States.

4. These norms, principles and commitments have enabled us to make progress in putting old confrontations behind us and in moving us closer to democracy, peace

and unity throughout the OSCE area. They must continue to guide us in the twenty-first century as we work together to make the ambitious vision of Helsinki and Paris a reality for all our peoples. These and all other OSCE documents establish clear standards for the participating States in their treatment of each other and of all individuals within their territories. Resolved to build further upon this strong foundation, we reaffirm our commitment to strengthen security, trust and good-neighbourly relations among our States and peoples. In this respect we are convinced that the role of the OSCE remains crucial, and should be further enhanced. We will further work towards strengthening the OSCE's effectiveness and efficiency.

5. We recognize that the OSCE, as the most inclusive and comprehensive regional security organization in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian area, continues to provide a unique forum, operating on the basis of consensus and the sovereign equality of States, for promoting open dialogue, preventing and settling conflicts, building mutual understanding and fostering cooperation. We stress the importance of the work carried out by the OSCE secretariat, High Commissioner on National Minorities, Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and Representative on Freedom of the Media, as well as the OSCE field operations, in accordance with their respective mandates, in assisting participating States with implementing their OSCE commitments. We are determined to intensify cooperation with the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and encourage its efforts to promote security, democracy and prosperity throughout the OSCE area and within participating States and to increase confidence among participating States. We also acknowledge the Organization's significant role in establishing effective confidence- and security-building measures. We reaffirm our commitment to their full implementation and our determination to ensure that they continue to make a substantial contribution to our common and indivisible security.

6. The OSCE's comprehensive and cooperative approach to security, which addresses the human, economic and environmental, political and military dimensions of security as an integral whole, remains indispensable. Convinced that the inherent dignity of the individual is at the core of comprehensive security, we reiterate that human rights and fundamental freedoms are inalienable, and that their protection and promotion is our first responsibility. We reaffirm categorically and irrevocably that the commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned. We value the important role played by civil society and free media in helping us to ensure full respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy, including free and fair elections, and the rule of law.

7. Serious threats and challenges remain. Mistrust and divergent security perceptions must be overcome. Our commitments in the politico-military, economic and environmental, and human dimensions need to be fully implemented. Respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law must be safeguarded and strengthened. Greater efforts must be made to promote freedom of religion or belief and to combat intolerance and discrimination. Mutually beneficial cooperation aimed at addressing the impact on our region's security of economic and environmental challenges must be further developed. Our energy security dialogue, including on agreed principles of our cooperation, must be enhanced. Increased efforts should be made to resolve existing conflicts in the OSCE area in a

peaceful and negotiated manner, within agreed formats, fully respecting the norms and principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the Helsinki Final Act. New crises must be prevented. We pledge to refrain from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations or with the 10 principles of the Helsinki Final Act.

8. Conventional arms control and confidence- and security-building regimes remain major instruments for ensuring military stability, predictability and transparency, and should be revitalized, updated and modernized. We value the work of the Forum for Security Cooperation, and look forward to the updating of the Vienna Document 1999. We value the contribution of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) to the creation of a stable and predictable environment for all OSCE participating States. we note that the CFE Treaty is not being implemented to its full capacity and the Agreement on Adaptation of the CFE Treaty has not entered into force. Recognizing intensified efforts to overcome the current impasse, we express our support for the ongoing consultations aiming at opening the way for negotiations in 2011.

9. At the same time, in today's complex and inter-connected world, we must achieve greater unity of purpose and action in facing emerging transnational threats, such as terrorism, organized crime, illegal migration, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, cyberthreats and the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, drugs and human beings. Such threats can originate within or outside our region.

10. We recognize that the security of the OSCE area is inextricably linked to that of adjacent areas, notably in the Mediterranean and in Asia. We must therefore enhance the level of our interaction with our Partners for Cooperation. In particular, we underscore the need to contribute effectively, based on the capacity and national interest of each participating State, to collective international efforts to promote a stable, independent, prosperous and democratic Afghanistan.

11. We welcome initiatives aimed at strengthening European security. Our security dialogue, enhanced by the Corfu Process, has helped to sharpen our focus on these and other challenges we face in all three dimensions. The time has now come to act, and we must define concrete and tangible goals in addressing these challenges. We are determined to work together to fully realize the vision of a comprehensive, cooperative and indivisible security community throughout our shared OSCE area. This security community should be aimed at meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century and based on our full adherence to common OSCE norms, principles and commitments across all three dimensions. It should unite all OSCE participating States across the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian region, free of dividing lines, conflicts, spheres of influence and zones with different levels of security. We will work to ensure that cooperation among our States, and among the relevant organizations and institutions of which they are members, will be guided by the principles of equality, partnership cooperation, inclusiveness and transparency. Drawing strength from our diversity, we resolve to achieve this overarching goal through sustained determination and common effort, acting within the OSCE and in other formats.

12. To this end, we task the incoming Chairmanship-in-Office with organizing a follow-up process within existing formats, taking into consideration ideas and

proposals put forward by the participating States, including in the framework of the Corfu Process and in the preparation of the Astana Summit, and pledge to do all we can to assist the incoming Chairmanships-in-Office in developing a concrete action plan based on the work done by the Kazakhstan Chairmanship. Progress achieved will be reviewed at the next OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Vilnius on 6 and 7 December 2011.

13. We express our deep gratitude to Kazakhstan for hosting our meeting, and for the energy and vitality the country has brought to the challenging task of chairing the OSCE in 2010. We welcome Lithuania's Chairmanship of the Organization in 2011, Ireland's in 2012 and Ukraine's in 2013.